

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 AID-20 EB-11 CIEP-02 TRSE-00 STR-08 OMB-01

CEA-02 COME-00 FRB-02 XMB-07 OPIC-12 LAB-06 SIL-01

DRC-01 /173 W

----- 124008

P R 051847Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8438

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, UK, PINT

SUBJECT: HOPE FOR EARLY END OF COAL STRIKE

REF: LONDON 2570

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: ALMOST AS SOON AS THE WILSON GOVERN-  
MENT TOOK SHAPE TODAY, HOPES ROSE SHARPLY THAT -- IN  
KEEPING WITH THE NEW PRIME MINISTER'S PLEDGE -- THERE  
WOULD BE AN EARLY END TO THE COAL STRIKE WHICH HAD  
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PRECIPITATED THE ELECTION. THE NEW SECRETARY OF STATE

FOR EMPLOYMENT, MICHAEL FOOT, MET WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF THE NATIONAL UNION OF MINeworkERS (NUM) TODAY AT THE DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT, AND LATER WITH THE NATIONAL COAL BOARD. THE NUM IS PLANNING TO RESUME ITS NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE COAL BOARD TOMORROW MORNING. PRIME MINISTER WILSON, FOOT AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT MET EARLIER WITH THE TUC LEADERSHIP AT 10 DOWNING STREET AND HEARD WILSON REITERATE HIS DETERMINATION TO END THE STRIKE. END SUMMARY

2. MICHAEL FOOT MET WITH THE NUM EXECUTIVE WHICH GATHERED IN LONDON IN ANTICIPATION OF A BREAK IN THE STRIKE. AN NUM OFFICIAL TOLD US THAT WILSON REITERATED HIS DETERMINATION TO END THE STRIKE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND TO USE THE JUST-COMPLETED RELATIVITIES REPORT OF THE PAY BOARD AS A BASIS FOR A SETTLEMENT. THE NUM OFFICIAL SAID THAT THE BOARD (WHOSE REPORT WILL BE MADE PUBLIC TOMORROW AFTERNOON) IS RECOMMENDING A SPECIAL 1 POUND 20 PENCE PREMIUM TO BE PAID TO EACH UNDERGROUND MINER PER SHIFT WORKED. A SPECIAL PREMIUM-

OF HALF THAT AMOUNT WILL BE PAID TO EX-UNDERGROUND WORKERS WHO FOR ONE REASON OR ANOTHER NO LONGER ARE WORKING BELOW THE SURFACE. THE NUM'S PROBLEM, THE OFFICIAL SAID, IS THAT THE SOLUTION MUST ALSO INCLUDE BENEFITS FOR SURFACE AND OTHER MINeworkERS IF IT IS TO BE "BOUGHT" BY THE EXECUTIVE, AND IT HAS TO BEAR A REASONABLE RELATION TO THEIR DEMAND. HOWEVER, THE NUM OFFICIAL ADDED THAT THE NUM AND THE NCB ARE NOW GOING INTO NEGOTIATIONS TOMORROW COMPLETELY "UNFETTERED" AND HE IS HIGHLY CONFIDENT THAT A SOLUTION WILL BE FOUND VERY SOON.

3. PRIME MINISTER WILSON ALSO MET WITH THE TUC LEADERSHIP AT 10 DOWNING STREET, TOGETHER WITH FOOT AND OTHER MEMBERS OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT. SIR SIDNEY GREENE, CHAIRMAN OF THE TUC'S ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, DESCRIBED THE SESSION AS A "PRELIMINARY CANTER" DURING WHICH THE PRIME MINISTER EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT THE FIRST PRIORITY WAS TO END THE MINE STRIKE. LEN MURRAY, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TUC GENERAL SECRETARY, REPORTED AFTER THE MEETING THAT THE TUC HAD DISCUSSED HIS "SOCIAL CONTRACT" WITH THEM

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AND THAT THE TUC "REPEATED TO THE PRIME MINISTER WHAT WE HAVE SAID PREVIOUSLY, THAT IF ACTION IS TAKEN ON PRICES, ON COUNCIL RENTS, THERE WILL BE A RESPONSE FROM THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT" (REFTEL). IN ANOTHER COMMENT ON THE MEETING, JACK JONES, HEAD OF THE TUC'S MOST POWERFUL UNION, THE TRANSPORT AND GENERAL WORKERS' UNION (TGWU), SAID THAT THERE WAS NOW A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT THE COUNTRY WOULD BE "GETTING BACK TO NORMAL" (FIVE-DAY WEEK). HE ADDED THAT THE APPOINTMENT OF FOOT WAS "A VERY GOOD SIGN" OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POSITIVE

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INTENTIONS.

4. COMMENT: IN ADDITION TO RAISING HOPES OF AN EARLY SETTLEMENT OF THE STRIKE -- AND THUS PAVING THE WAY FOR A RETURN TO NORMAL WORKING, WILSON MAY HAVE ALSO TAKEN A SURPRISE STEP IN THE "MODERATING OF MICHAEL FOOT" BY GIVING HIM THE TOUGH TASK OF DEALING WITH INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS. FOOT WILL NOW HAVE TO DEVOTE ALL OF HIS EXTRAORDINARY ENERGY TO THE TASK OF CONCILIATION, MODERATING, AMELIORATING AND SOFTENING OF DEMANDS FOR HIGHER WAGES FROM THE UNIONS IN THE FACE OF RISING PRICES. AFTER THE MINERS RETURN TO WORK, FOOT WILL ALSO HAVE TO DEAL WITH CLAIMS FROM ENGINEERING, SHIP-BUILDING, RAILWAY, AUTOMOBILE, AND OTHER WORKERS, AND -- IF THERE IS NO LONGER TO BE A STATUTORY INCOMES POLICY -- PERHAPS RENEWED DEMANDS FROM THOSE WHO HAVE ALREADY SETTLED UNDER STAGE THREE. AS ONE WAG COMMENTED, "NOW THE SHOE WILL BE ON THE OTHER FOOT."

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LABOR RELATIONS, LABOR UNIONS, COAL MINING, CENTRAL GOVERNMENT, LABOR STRIKES, POLITICAL PARTIES, NATIONAL ELECTIONS, STRIKE SETTLEMENT  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 05 MAR 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974LONDON02807  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** n/a  
**From:** LONDON  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740368/aaaackug.tel  
**Line Count:** 191  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 4  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** LONDON 2570  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 19 JUL 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <19-Jul-2001 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <04 JUN 2002 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** HOPE FOR EARLY END OF COAL STRIKE  
**TAGS:** ELAB, PINT, UK  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005